(b) if so, whether all the formalities of this merger have been completed?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Regulatory mechanism for Airport

1236. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration for the setting up of regulatory mechanism for airports in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) In the context of possible privatisation of airports in the country, the Government has received a suggestion to create a regulatory framework for airports independent of DGCA. No concrete decision has so far been taken.

Aircrafts with IA/AI

1237. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of aircrafts which are in possession of the Indian Airlines and Air India indicating the number of aged aircrafts being used for lifting of air passengers by each Airline till date;

(b) whether old aircrafts used by IA on its subsidiaries are as per the international standards; and

(c) if not, whether Government propose to abandon old/aged aircrafts considering the safety factor of passengers travelling by such planes and if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) The fleet of Air India consists of 26 aircraft with average age of 13.6 years.

The fleet of Indian Airlines/Alliance Air consists of 54 aircraft with average age of 12.8 years.

(b) and (c) No Life span is specified for aircraft. The operation of an aircraft may continue subject to its air-worthiness being certified by the DGCA.

Alliance between AI and International Airlines

1238. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India is contemplating to enter into an alliance with some international airlines;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Air India had recently withdrawn some of their flights and if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether the alliance would help the Airline in restoration of the flights recently withdrawn?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) Air India already have Code-share/Joint Venture/Alliance Agreements with Air France, Air Mauritius, Austrian Airlines, Asiana Airlines, Bellview Airlines, Gulf Air, Kuwait Airways, Malaysian Airlines, Scandinavian Airlines, Singapore Airlines and Swiss Air.

(c) As part of its route-rationalisation, Air India have withdrawn services from Frankfurt, Rome and Manchester during the year 1999.

(d) Out of the three stations withdrawn from the network, Frankfurt is presently begin served by Air India through a connect Code-share with Air France over Paris.

Expansion of Bhopal Airport for Airbus service

†1239. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the matter of constructing an airfield at Bhopal to introduce an airbus service by Airports Authority of India is under consideration;

(b) if so, whether the proposal to allocate extra land for extension

†Original Notice of the Question was received in Hindi.